DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 130 670 IR 004 218

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TITLE A Study of the Library Skills Instruction of Entering Freshmen to St. Francis Seminary High School.
PUB DATE Jul 76
NOTE 53p.; Master's Thesis, Xavier University; portions of the Appendix may not reproduce well

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Elementary Schools; Grade 9; *High School Students; *Library Instruction; *Library Skills; Masters Theses; Middle Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Saint Francis Seminary High School

ABSTRACT

Using a 40-student sample from the entering freshmen class of St. Francis Seminary High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, the library skills instruction in elementary and secondary schools was evaluated. A questionnaire was sent to 61 schools previously attended by the students in the sample to gather information on their library instruction programs. The subjects were given a reading test and a library skills test early in the term prior to any library instruction. No significant difference could be determined between the library skills of students who had received formal library instruction and those who were trained informally, although it was shown that formally-trained students scored higher in some areas. Because of the general lack of library skills, formal training at the secondary level was recommended. A 33-item bibliography and the questionnaires and quizzes used in the study are appended. (PF)

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A STUDY OF THE LIBRARY SKILLS INSTRUCTION OF ENTERING FRESHMEN TO ST. FRANCIS SEMINARY HIGH SCHOOL

by
Denise Reineke Fischer

Previous Degrees, Institutions, and Years of Graduation
B.A., Rice University, 1973

Submitted to Mr. G. L. Jacobs of the Graduate School of
Xavier University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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Cincinnati, Ohio
July, 1976

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Letter of Approval

Denise Fischer has presented her plan for a library survey project. During this presentation we discussed the various parts of the project. After seeing the outlined plan and the materials to be used, I hereby give my permission for this project to be pursued in this school and under its name.

Fr. John R. Boehman, ofm

Rev. John R. Boehman, O.F.M.
Rector

July 27, 1976

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was undertaken to fulfill a dual purpose. One, it is the product of a deep-rooted feeling that the school library must be recognized as an integral and necessary part of a student's educational process. For years the library has been regarded as an ornamental addition to an institution where knowledge is stored but not necessarily accessible to everyone. Only an increased awareness of the role that the library must play, if our students are to grow academically, will change this trend to create a facility that is truly a part of the institution.

Second, the faculty of St. Francis Seminary High School, sharing in this researcher's concern, have chosen to adopt this project as one of their self-studies to comply with the State of Ohio's guidelines for minimum standards for high schools. For their concern and willingness to assist me, I am truly grateful. Most especially, I wish to thank Rev. John R. Boehman, O.F.M., rector of St. Francis Seminary, and Mrs. Dorothy Gilroy, librarian, without whose help and encouragement this project could not have been undertaken.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Each level of education is expected to provide a foundation of learning that will enable the student to adequately advance his knowledge at each succeeding level. By the time a student has reached the secondary level of education, he should be prepared to accept the more specialized instruction which distinguishes secondary education from that of the primary levels. In order to achieve within this new system of instruction, he must have been exposed to concrete skills within the lower grades. Typical of secondary education is the increased amount of written research which the student is expected to use to broaden his educational base. This researcher has observed that within this area, concrete skills from the elementary levels are often lacking.

In speaking of these concrete skills necessary for research writing, we are dealing here specifically with those library skills necessary to obtain needed information. This researcher has observed that entering ninth graders do not have a sound foundation in resource materials, use of the card catalog to retrieve information within a library facility, knowledge of the way books are arranged within the library, and how periodicals can assist in retrieving information. Without these basic skills, the student finds himself at a serious disadvantage in terms of research skills and a re-education process must be completed before a student could hope to succeed academically through the upper secondary levels.

The purpose of this study then is to examine what skills an entering freshman should have based on the studies of several educators, determine what skills an entering class from varying school systems do have, suggest a program by which these students would be insured of having these skills before entering high school, and suggest a program by which the student lacking these skills would be insured of success in high school.

Hypothesis

Students who have a directed, formal course of study in library skills within the lower grades will show significantly greater ability in terms of researching ability when they enter high school than students who are minimally or informally exposed.

Assumptions Underlying the Hypothesis

If the above hypothesis as stated is to be considered valid, the researcher must assume the following statements to be true:

All students entering high school have had some type of library exposure.

All schools, students, and teachers questioned will understand and correctly interpret all questions asked and will answer them honestly.

All questionnaires were objective and relevant.

The library skills test administered to the students was an objective examination of skills.

All library skills tested were essential to high school researching success.

The students answered all library skills test questions without wild guessing; thus, those questions answered correctly truly reflect knowledge.

The reading skills test administered to the students was an objective examination and the norms were valid.

All students tested received the same instructions, had the same amount of

time available to complete the test, and were as compatible in environmental testing areas as possible.

All students tested maximized their former instructions as presented.

Definition of Terms

secondary level of education - grades 9-12

primary or elementary level of education - grades K-8

concrete library skills - skills needed to obtain direct information (i.e. those skills displayed in Table 1)

directed, formal course of study - carrying out in regular classroom practices a prescribed curriculum of library instruction

informal course of study - receiving instruction based on direct student inquiry without the benefit of a broad based, formal instruction; usually given as the need arises, not prior to the problem arising

pre-test - a test administered prior to any instruction being given so as to determine knowledge initially present

a research assignment - an assignment that is composed of information obtained from materials outside classroom textbooks

Analysis of Related Studies

What makes a study on library instruction in the lower grades so pressing is the fact that only recently has the educational world begun to see the necessity of such skills. Only since the dramatic "information explosion" have educators begun to realize that the independent search for knowledge must begin early in the primary grades. As a result of this awareness, Title II funds were granted in 1965 through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to develop libraries within the lower grades. Up to this

point, many elementary schools were equipped solely with small classroom collections.

Studies reviewed in the school library area seemed to fit into two main categories-- that of deficient library training as a cycle needing to be broken, and library instruction as it affects achievement. Though, it is this study's purpose to explore this latter category, category one must be mentioned for without adequate training, achievement effects could never be realized.

Estella E. Reed explores this first aspect in the surroundings of middle school (grades 6-8) where she feels the necessary concepts of student self-direction and self-responsibility can be fostered through library research, but are not being encouraged due to the inadequacy of teachers to present such skills. In tests conducted, it was learned that there was a direct relation between the lack of student library skills and those skills held by their teachers. Therefore, Reed encourages training to begin early in order that the ignorance cycle can be broken.[24]

Malcolm Alexander took his research to the university where he hypothesized that entering freshmen from Washington State high schools lacked the basic skills needed to function to the optimum in assigned course work. Like Reed, he viewed the lack of library skills as a self-perpetuating cycle that must be broken by re-education of future teachers. Using the Feagley test as his measurement instrument, he found that all sample students tested below the fiftieth percentile, a point where the researcher established as showing an inability to function independently in library research activities found in most university courses. He thus recommended pre-testing every entering freshman followed by instruction in weak areas.[3]

Merits of increased library instruction can also be seen in general

standardized achievement tests. Most striking of these studies was conducted by Irene Hale to determine if library service produced a measurable increase of academic achievement over that of students who were not similarly exposed. The verbal section of the SAT was used as the criterion for measurement of achievement. Two groups of equal intelligence were pre-tested; after which, the experimental group was involved in library skills lessons conducted by a librarian coupled with independent study. The control group followed routine classroom instruction with normal library interaction. On the post-test, the experimental group showed a gain of 49 points mean average compared to an 8.8 point gain by the control group. In addition to this gain, it was noted that enthusiasm for learning was higher when students were encouraged with independent study through the use of library skills.[13]

This incidence of increased achievement is not simply an isolated case. Mary V. Gaver found in her experiment, using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, that students in grades 4-6 who had access to an elementary school library program exhibited higher educational gain in those grades than children who had not had this exposure.[10]

Similar findings were unearthed when Virginia McConnaha examined entering ninth graders from different elementary backgrounds. Looking at a pre-test score of library skills competency, students achieved higher scores when their backgrounds reflected library skills training than when they did not. McConnaha also noted the greater inquisitiveness of students who were exposed to library training and their willingness to seek out materials. Moreover, when she surveyed the first semester honor roll, a positive correlation was seen between achievement and those students who had received library training in elementary school.[20]

This researcher feels that the above studies provide a basis for the

opinion that library skill backgrounds are needed for the student to reach optimum achievement. However, this study chooses to carry these studies one step further by contending that library training itself is not the key to success, but that it is the method of instruction that will reflect the greatest asset to achievement.

CHAPTER II. METHOD OF ATTACK

Prelinimaries

In order to prove the hypothesis that formal training is superior to informal training, it is necessary to secure a random sample from varying backgrounds, preferably from various areas of the country. Having secured such a population, the researcher must then determine exactly what types of skills each student was exposed to in addition to the method in which he was instructed. Furthermore, it is necessary to test each sample participant, not only to determine exactly what information was retained in terms of type of training, but what skills displayed a deficiency regardless of the training method. The third variable necessary to either prove or disprove the hypothesis is to determine exactly what is expected of the students entering high school in terms of researching assignments during the school year.

Assembling data on these three variables should display one of two things: 1) either that students who were informally trained would be significantly deficient in skills to compete in research assignments with formally trained students, or 2) that though students had had formal training in library skills, they too would show deficiencies in researching methods making them also unable to adequately compete in researching assignments. In either case, a prescription of some sort would be necessary.

Procedures Employed

The Sample:

Due to the time and expense involved in securing a truly random sample, secondary measures were necessary. Therefore, the sample chosen was taken from the entering freshmen class of St. Francis Seminary High School in

Cincinnati, Ohio. This all-male class was educated in different school systems of various sizes and in different parts of the country. They were also basically homogeneous in mental ability since students admitted must have an average or above IQ. Therefore, it was felt that their type of training could be examined without fear that mental ability was a significant factor in their ability to learn. The total sample size numbered 41. Though not as large a sample as might be wished, it was felt that definite trends would become visible.

In order to determine the methods of instruction experienced by each student, their past records were checked and both elementary and middle schools were noted. A questionnaire was then sent to each school in order to evaluate their instruction.

The School Questionnaire:

To compile the questionnaire, three main sources were consulted to present what researchers have determined to be the proper skills that a student should have been taught before he enters high school and at what grades these should have been covered. It was felt that the works of Melvyn K. Bowers,[7] Violet E. Peterson,[22] and the curriculum guide compiled by the Sulphur Springs, Texas Independent School District[32] best illustrated a well-rounded, complete exposure to library skills. Table I provides a listing of skills used in this study and the grades in which they should be taught as recommended by these researchers. The questionnaire also examined the method of instruction and defined these terms in order to avoid interpretational error. As a further safeguard to the validity of the response, an area was provided for a detailed description of the curriculum. It was felt that through this description, the researcher could better apply her own definition to the course described and in tallying responses insure

TABLE I. LIBRARY SKILLS NEEDED PRIOR TO ENTERING HIGH SCHOOL AND THEIR RECOMMENDED GRADES FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

SKILL	GRADE		
	Bowers	Peterson	Sulphur Springs
use of title pages in books	2		3
use of index in books	5		3
use of table of contents	5		3
use of glossary	5		3
location of books via call no.	3		3
the Dewey Decimal Classification	6	8	5
author entry in the card catalog	4		4
subject entry in the card catalog	4		4
title entry in the card catalog	4		4
"see" & "see also" references	5		
types of card catalogs		6	
how to read a unit card		8	
alphabetization in the card catalog		7	
use of an encyclopedia	5	7	6
use of a dictionary	6(unabr) 2(abr)		5(unabridged)
use of an atlas	6		
use of a gazeteer			6
use of almanacs	6		5
use of maps	5		3
use of Reader's Guide	7		6
use of the vertical file	4	8	5
footnotes & bibliography	7	7	6
evaluation of books through reviews	7		
use of call slips		8	
use of audio-visual materials	6		

their consistency. Unfortunately, in those questionnaires returned without a description, the researcher was forced to accept the interpretation of the respondant. In order to better insure that our sample student was enrolled in the school for the instruction (if it were formal), a question was given for duration of formal curriculum procedures. In this manner, should a formal course of instruction have been instituted within the last two years in the elementary school, for example, our ninth grade student could not have benefited from the program. Further, a question was asked to determine at what grade level exposure was first given in order to evaluate how closely our sample met with the researchers views as shown in Table I. So as to ascertain the size of the library facility (assuming the greater the resources, the greater availability for different student exposures), the number of monographs and periodicals were requested. Lastly, it was felt that a feeling for the trend toward use of A-V resources was needed, so a question as to student access to these materials was given. Appendix I displays the questionnaire's finished state.

Sixty one schools were attended by our sample. This number was derived from the fact that most students attended K-8 within one facility, while others did change facilities at some point within their education. Accompanying the questionnaire was a cover letter explaining the purpose for the mailing (Appendix II). If responses had not been received within three weeks of the first mailing, a second cover letter was sent with a new questionnaire (Appendix III). In each mailing, a stamped self-addressed return envelope was enclosed.

The Test:

At the same time as the questionnaires were being processed, a student

test was being prepared. The subject matter to be tested corresponded with the topics included on the school questionnaire. To insure the objectivity and readability of the test itself, assistance was drawn through the use of The Bennett Use of Library Test (Forms A & B)[4,5] and A Library Orientation Test for College Freshmen by Ethel Feagley[8], as well as those questions used in the research studies of Mary Gillespie[11], Irene Hale[13], and Golden Adams.[2] Only those questions which pertained to the specified material and which were felt both equal to the reading level of the sample and of either a true-false or multiple choice format were used. For areas not covered by these sources, the researcher composed the questions. Since the period for testing was set for forty minutes, thirty-six questions were selected, thus allowing one minute for each question and four minutes for directions. At least one question on each topic area was included in that number. Appendix IV displays the sample test.

Unfortunately, students were unable to be tested in one group or in the same room. Admittedly, this does enter a bias into the test results, but precautions were taken to keep these at a minimum. Students were thus tested during the first week of class prior to any library instruction. Both groups were tested on the same day and were tested in successive periods. Only three minutes elapsed between the time one test was completed and the second begun. It is felt that these precautions did not enable any information of the test to pass from one group to the other. Instructions which preceded the test were identical and of such a self-explanatory nature that there were no additional questions in either section. (Appendix V)

In order to cross-check the validity of the test as to subject content and not to readability, standardized reading comprehension scores were obtained. The testing element used was the Science Research Association's

Reading Record[27] and was administered to the total sample in unison during freshmen orientation one week before the library test. No instructional classes were held between the administration of the reading and library skills tests. It was felt that should reading comprehension scores prove high, low library skill scores could be attributed only to deficient skills and not lack of reading comprehension. Likewise, should reading scores prove low, but library skill schores high, achievement in library skills could be assumed. Once this high and low trend were noticed, it could be assumed that the test was valid in content and not a test of reading comprehension.

The Student Questionnaire:

In an attempt to determine if students knew what they were being instructed and to lend validity to school questionnaire responses, a separate questionnaire was given to the students after they had completed their test. The same subject items listed on the school survey were included on the student survey. In addition, student opinions of when and by whom they were exposed to library functions were presented. Appendix VI displays a sample copy as given.

The Teacher Questionnaire:

As was mentioned in the preliminary statements to this procedure, three variables are linked to proving the hypothesis. In order to determine whether the deficiency of skills will prove harmful to the student, a questionnaire was sent to all faculty members within the St. Francis facility (Appendix VII). Judging from the assignments listed and the classification of students involved, the researcher would be better able to suggest a course outline to eliminate skill deficiencies prior to the task being assigned.

CHAPTER III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

The School Questionnaire:

Of the 61 schools contacted, 62% of the questionnaires were returned providing an excellent basis for analyzing student experience. Of those 62%, only three schools were rejected from the sample: one because the librarian was new to the school and unaware of past programs, and two because the schools no longer existed. Moreover, only one school reported no library instruction available. Appendix I shows a breakout of responses received. It can also be noted from this analysis that of the items considered essential to student education, nine were not covered by 50% of the reporting schools. By comparing these figures with Table I, it can be seen that most of these skills should have been covered within the early primary grades. For example, only six schools reported instruction on the use of the pamphlet and vertical file while researchers consider this to be a skill to be covered in grades 4 and 5. Two of the skills, how to read a catalog card and use of the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, will be shown later to be a mandatory skill vital to success in high school assignments. Yet, only nine schools covered the former skill and sixteen schools the latter.

This researcher feels that the reporting of these skills is a fairly accurate representation of actuality. A check on this validity was tested by comparing student questionnaire responses with those of the schools, revealing that students basically agreed with the schools over what was in fact covered. This agreement also answers the question of whether students were aware of what they were being instructed. Therefore, if the student missed the question, it could be stated that retention was playing a larger factor than ignorance of the skill itself. And when entering

the realm of retention, one begins to examine the teaching method.

The school questionnaires also revealed that the majority of our sample's instruction began in grades 3 and 4. This is also an important factor in that with this length of exposure, most deficiencies should have been corrected with a proper method of instruction.

The Test:

No student received a perfect score on the test. The highest percent correct was 89% while the lowest score was 28%. The mean score was 62.5%. To check the testability of the quiz, reading scores were obtained using the SRA Reading Record[27] in which percentiles are based on ninth grade norms. Table II charts out the test and reading scores for each student. It was felt by the researcher that if students who scored less than 50% on the reading scores could achieve high scores on the library skills test, then reading ability had not paid a significant factor in the scoring of the test. Figure I shows a scatterplot of scores versus reading ability. From this plotting it can be assumed that though reading did have some influence, the effect was not significant to invalidate the test. Only a +1 correlation would have shown a direct correlation between the two scores.

Returning to the test itself, Table III represents an item analysis of the quiz. As was expected, those skills which were covered by less than 50% of the schools showed an increased number of student error. It can be noted, too, that of these nine items shown in the table, over 50% of the responses in each category were covered in the formal method of instruction. However, this test analysis did uncover a most alarming factor. Looking at twelve of the test questions which were covered by more than 50% of the responding schools, seven showed more than one-half of the students missing them. These

TABLE II. A COMPARISON OF TEST SCORES:
READING VS. LIBRARY SKILLS

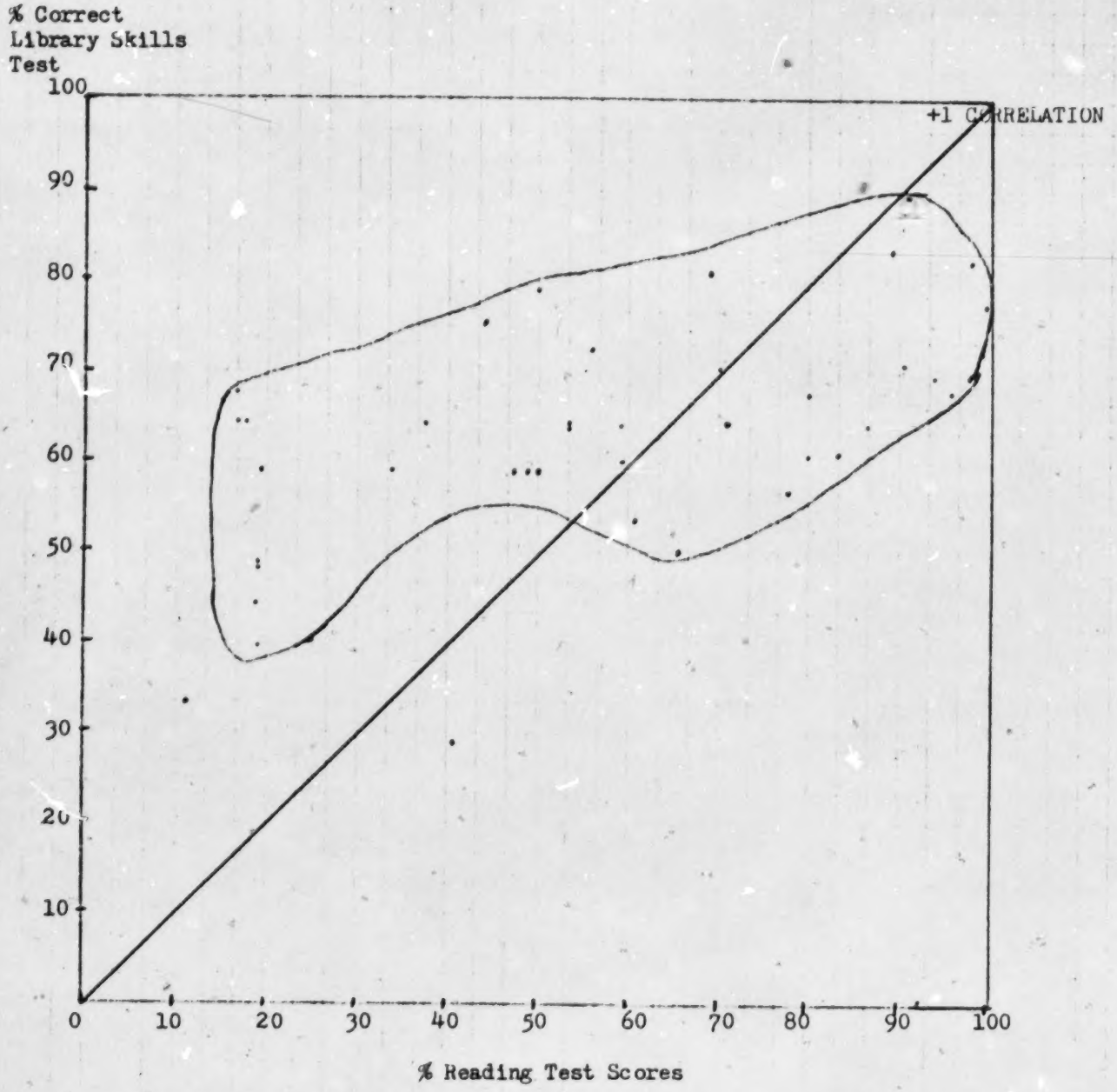
STUDENT	PERCENTILE READING	TOTAL NO. CORRECT LIB. SK.	PERCENTILE CORRECT LIB. SK.
1	80%	22	61%
2	80%	24	67%
3	88%	30	83%
4	68%	29	81%
5	71%	23	64%
6	77%	20	56%
7	--	17	47%
8	18%	17	47%
9	53%	23	64%
10	19%	21	58%
11	37%	23	64%
12	50%	21	58%
13	49%	21	58%
14	44%	27	75%
15	18%	17	47%
16	65%	18	50%
17	59%	22	61%
18	18%	16	44%
19	16%	24	67%
20	91%	24	67%
21	53%	23	64%
22	97%	28	78%
23	83%	22	61%

TABLE II. CONTINUED--

STUDENT	PERCENTILE READING	TOTAL NO. CORRECT LIB. SK.	PERCENTILE CORRECT LIB. SK.
24	61%	19	53%
25	34%	21	58%
26	47%	21	58%
27	94%	25	69%
28	12%	12	33%
29	17%	24	67%
30	59%	23	64%
31	55%	26	72%
32	86%	23	64%
33	18%	14	39%
34	99%	29	81%
35	70%	26	72%
36	--	31	86%
37	92%	32	89%
38	41%	10	28%
39	95%	24	67%
40	50%	28	78%

NOTE: Students 7 and 36 did not complete the reading test due to illness. They were not included in any analysis for this reason.

FIGURE I. A SCATTERPLOT SHOWING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN READING TEST SCORES AND LIBRARY SKILLS SCORES



questions came generally from knowledge about the parts of the book itself, and arrangement of the books within a library. Unfortunately, these skills are basic, for without locating skills even the most simple research is impossible. Moreover, the breakout shows that these skills were usually not taught within an informal environment, thus throwing some shadow upon the effectiveness of the formal training.

One weakness of the test must be noted. Question one deals with the use of the appendix of a book, which is considered by experts to be a topic to be covered as early as grade three. It also is a skill which reflected student error of 50%. Yet, in preparing the school and student questionnaire, the topic was inadvertantly omitted. Therefore, the researcher is unable to determine if the skill was covered by the schools and, as a result, the question must be disregarded from skill analysis. One can speculate, however, that since questions 4 and 11 deal with parts of a book and were covered by a significant number of schools, this skill was also covered and thus should have shown a smaller percentage of error.

The bulk of the data analysis came after students were grouped by their method of instruction (i.e. formal or informal). Since this could not be determined without the receipt of the school questionnaire, thirteen students had to be eliminated from the sample. From the schools reporting library instruction, the researcher was able to comprise a sample of sixteen students with formal training and eleven students with informal training. Refering again to Table II (pg. 14), a general comparison was made to determine if the mean correct scores on the library skills test were higher among the formally instructed than the informally instructed. The results showed that the mean score for those formally trained was 64% while the mean for those informally trained was 61%. To further point out that reading ability in itself did not

TABLE III. LIBRARY SKILLS TEST ANALYSIS

QUESTION	SKILL TESTED	NO. OF SCHOOLS WHERE TAUGHT	NO. OF SCHOOLS WHERE TAUGHT FORMALLY	NO. OF STUDENTS WHO MISSED QUESTION
1	use of appendix			20
*2	use of footnotes	13	10	26
3	types of card catalogs	20	14	8
**4	use of index	33	19	20
*5	use of Reader's Guide	16	11	16
6	use of card catalog	36	22	8
7	use of encyclopedia	36	22	7
8	"see" & "see also"	18	13	4
*9	use of Reader's Guide	16	11	7
**10	use of table of contents	33	19	21
11	use of dictionary	35	22	3
12	"see" & "see also"	18	13	12
13	use of index	33	19	8
14	location via call nos.	33	22	19
15	location via call nos.	33	22	3
16	use of maps	32	19	3
17	use of dictionary	35	22	3
*18	how to read a cat. card	9	6	21
*19	use of a gazeteer	15	10	33
**20	use of a bibliography	20	13	25
*21	use of ref. indexes	16	12	6
22	location via call nos.	33	22	18
*23	use of a vertical file	6	6	35

TABLE III. CONTINUED--

QUESTION	SKILL TESTED	NO. OF SCHOOLS WHERE TAUGHT	NO. OF SCHOOLS WHERE TAUGHT FORMALLY	NO. OF STUDENTS WHO MISSED QUESTION
**24	use of subject entry	29	18	32
*25	use of call slip	5	5	14
**26	Dewey Decimal Classif.	31	20	29
27	alpha. in card catalog	36	22	12
28	use of bibliography	20	13	16
29	use of encyclopedia	36	22	5
30	Dewey Decimal Classif.	31	20	16
**31	location via call no.	33	22	21
32	alpha. in card catalog	36	22	15
33	use of encyclopedia	36	22	10
**34	use of almanac	27	18	24
*35	book reviews	10	8	11
36	use of atlas	32	21	10

KEY: * means skill covered by less than 50% of responding schools

** means skill covered by more than 50% of responding schools but exhibiting more than 50% student error

play a significant role in the test scores, the mean reading scores within each group were taken. This revealed that though the formal scores for library skills were higher, the reading scores for formal students were lower. The mean reading score for formally trained students was only 52% while the reading score for informally trained students was 61%. Shown graphically in Figure II, it can be seen that considering both reading and library scores, the formal students performed higher. Point A on Figure II must be disregarded in this conclusion as anomaly.

To further investigate the effectiveness of formal skills instruction, each group was analyzed in terms of the number of questions missed versus the number of those related skills to which they were never exposed. Two factors were being questioned here: 1) the method of teaching under which non-exposure was greater, and 2) the greater the amount of non-exposure, the less effective the method of teaching.

Tables IV and V show the percentage of non-exposure for each error per student. The mean average of those informally trained showed that 38% of all student errors were due to non-exposure versus 23% in the formal grouping. Though a difference of 15% is revealed favoring formal instruction, the high percentage of non-exposure found in the formal grouping bears investigation. A more detailed discussion of this will occur in Chapter IV.

FIGURE II. A GRAPH SHOWING TEST PERFORMANCE OF FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY TRAINED STUDENTS

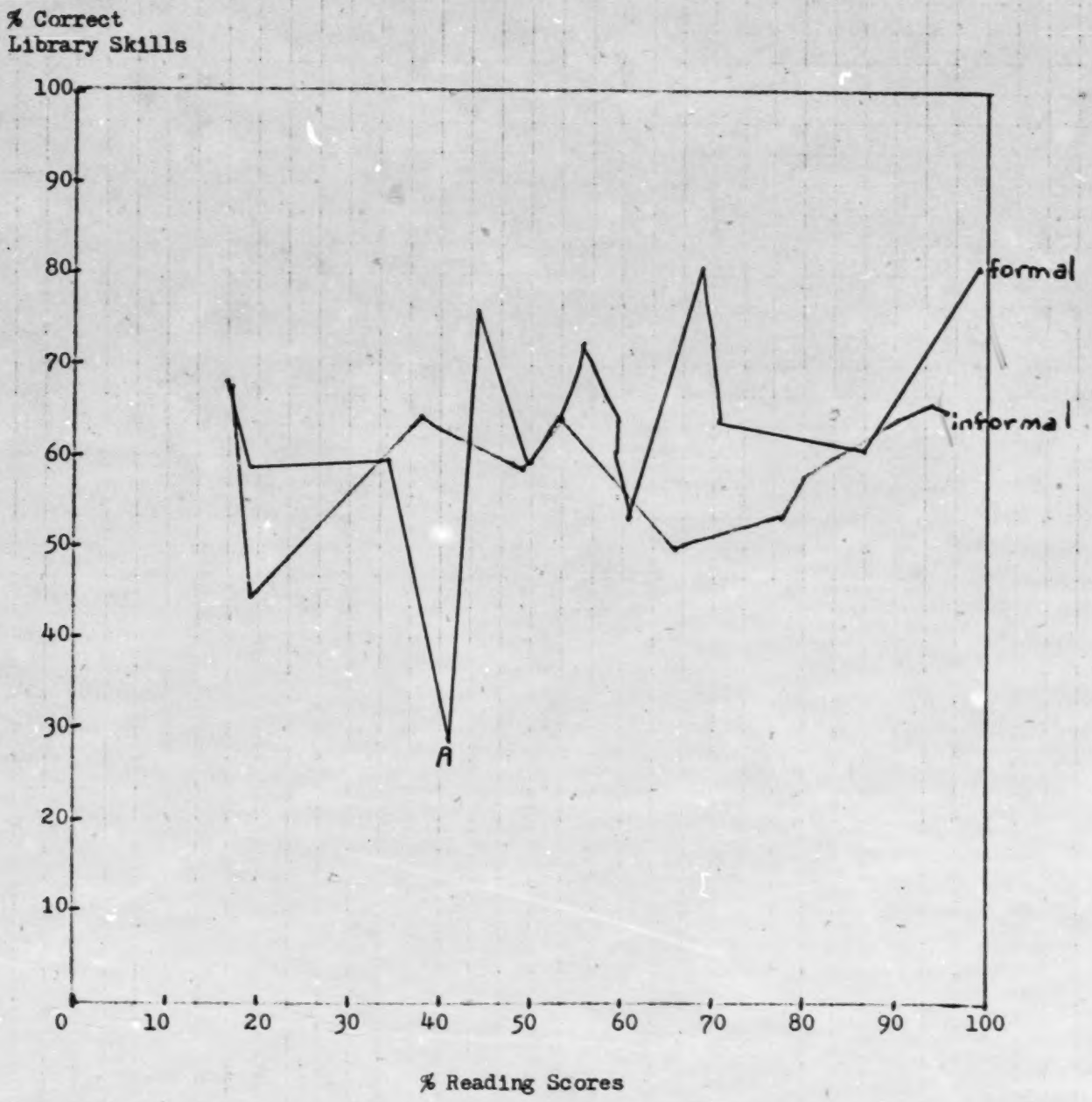


TABLE IV. THE RELATION OF QUESTIONS MISSED TO NON-EXPOSURE AS SEEN IN FORMALLY TRAINED STUDENTS

STUDENT	NO. OF QUESTIONS MISSED	NO. OF QUESTIONS NOT EXPOSED TO	PERCENTAGE
4	7	1	14%
5	13	5	46%
10	15	4	27%
12	15	2	13%
14	9	3	33%
17	14	4	29%
19	12	1	8%
24	17	4	24%
25	15	6	40%
30	13	1	8%
31	10	2	20%
32	13	3	23%
34	7	3	43%
35	10	2	20%
38	26	1	4%
21	13	5	38%

TABLE V. THE RELATION OF QUESTIONS MISSED TO NON-EXPOSURE AS SEEN IN INFORMALLY TRAINED STUDENTS

STUDENT	NO. OF QUESTIONS MISSED	NO. OF QUESTIONS NOT EXPOSED TO	PERCENTAGE
1	14	9	64%
6	16	5	31%
9	13	1	8%
11	13	8	62%
13	15	6	40%
16	18	7	39%
18	20	12	60%
20	12	6	50%
27	11	1	9%
29	12	4	33%
39	12	1	8%

Teacher Questionnaire:

Finally, but before conclusions on the hypothesis can be made, an analysis of the teacher questionnaire must be pursued. In this manner, one can compare student knowledge with the expectations held for him during his high school career. To accomplish this, the results of the 36 faculty questionnaires were tabled according to what library skills would be needed to complete each assignment at each grade level. The questionnaires received reflected the lesson plans of 36 separate courses (Table VI) taught by twelve different faculty members. It should be interesting to note that only twelve out of the thirty six classes offered within the facility did not plan research of any type in addition to prescribed course work. This, in itself, reflects the need of adequate referencing skills. The skills presented and the reference titles cited in Table VII are taken from the collection which the students have at their disposal.

A comparison of Table VII and Table III (pg. 18) reveal what skills were deficient in student sampling, and whether these same skills are needed for research purposes. As can be seen from Table VII, researching skills with a focus upon use of the card catalog, Reader's Guide, biographical sources, and paper composition are emphasized. It is interesting to note that each of these above mentioned areas compose the questions most missed by students on the skills quiz. Table VIII breaks these out in terms of questions missed by formally and informally taught students. From looking at this table it is alarming to note the high percentages derived from the formally trained students-- all 50% and over except question 5. However, the informally trained students still show the greater disadvantage as four questions showed error of greater than 80% with two of these showing 100% error. Even more alarming, though, is the fact that

Table VII shows that these same skills are needed in grades 10-12. Therefore, without further instruction, the deficiencies seen here will not be corrected.

TABLE VI. COURSES SURVEYED FOR RESEARCHING DEMANDS

Latin I	Remedial Reading	Geometry	Physics
Latin II	English I	Algebra I(2 secs.)	World Tech.
Latin III	English II	Algebra II	Religion I
Latin IV	English III	Health	Religion II
German I	English IV	American History	Religion III
German II	Spanish I	World History	Religion IV
German III	Spanish II	Civics	Music I
German IV	Spanish III	Biology	Music II
Speech I	Speech III	Speech IV	

TABLE VII. LIBRARY SKILLS NEEDED BY GRADE

9th	10th
use of Ref. Book Guide	use of card catalog-- all entries
use of card catalog subject headings author entry title entry	botanical & zoological references
use of Catholic Periodical Index and Reader's Guide to locate current articles & book reviews	encyclopedia
ref. books dealing with criticism & interpretation of literature	dictionary
encyclopedia	lexicons
bi-lingual dictionary	bi-lingual dictionaries
dictionary	Reader's Guide & Catholic Period Index
biographical sources Current Biography New Century Cyclopedia of Names Webster's Biog. Dictionary Great Mathematicians Makers of the Mod. World Harper's Encyclopedia of Sci.	collections of idiomatic expressions
use of the Franciscana collection	Current Biography
use of the Bible	sources of book reviews
use of Bible guides	references on debate organization
use of AV materials records, slides filmstrips	biographical references--see 9th listing
guides to use of footnotes and bibliographies	use of Franciscana collection
	use of the Bible and Bible guides

TABLE VII. CONTINUED--

11th	12th
encyclopedia	encyclopedia
dictionary	dictionary
card catalog--all entries	card catalog--all entries
Reader's Guide and Cath. Period. Index	Reader's Guide and Cath. Period. Ind.
lexicons	lexicons
idiomatic expression collections	bi-lingual dictionaries
bi-lingual dictionaries	idiomatic expression collections
biographical references--see 9th listing	books of literary criticism
Encyclopedia of Science	sources of book reviews
use of Franciscana collection	Encyclopedia of Science
use of Bible & Bible guides	biographical sources: including Popular Science Encyclopedia of Science, Men of Science
	use of Franciscana collection
	use of Bible & Bible guides

TABLE VIII. MANDATORY SKILLS WHICH WERE MOST COMMONLY MISSED ANALYZED IN TERMS OF TRAINING

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY MISSED WITH CORRESPONDING TEST QUESTION NUMBER	MISSED BY FORMALLY TRAINED STUDENTS	MISSED BY INFORMALLY TRAINED STUDENTS
2. Footnotes	56%	91%
5. Reader's Guide	38%	36%
11. Table of Contents	63%	55%
19. How to read a unit card	56%	73%
20. Bibliography	69%	82%
22. Location via call number	50%	45%
24. Subject entry (card catalog)	75%	100%
26. Dewey Decimal Classification	56%	100%
31. Location via call number	50%	56%

CHAPTER IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study has attempted to deal with the problem of the deficiency in library skills held by entering freshmen students. A sample was chosen from St. Francis Seminary High School and through an examination of their school backgrounds, followed by a test of library skills, an attempt was made to prove the hypothesis that students who were formally trained in library skills within the primary grades will show a significantly greater ability to succeed in high school research projects than students who were informally trained. A questionnaire to the faculty at the facility provided the information needed for showing abilities expected.

Conclusions

A significant difference between the two variables could not be determined through this sample. Yet, it has been shown that those students who had experienced formal training in library skills did score higher on those areas felt essential to high school researching success by experts in the field.

This researcher feels that the hypothesis as originally stated is still a legitimate one, but that she was unable to determine this because of other factors. For the most part, the sample size was extremely small, and limited further by the incomplete return of questionnaires. Therefore, the sample did not allow for a wide range of individuals to be tested.

Since the study dealt mainly with educational backgrounds, this retrospective view left many uncontrollable variables. For one thing, though the schools questioned claimed that the skills were taught, often other factors such as a change in schools or absence from that particular

section for some unknown reason may have prevented our sample student from receiving the instruction. Moreover, many students later admitted that some of their library instruction had come from outside the school boundaries -- from relatives, public library, etc. This study, unfortunately, could not control these variables, and since the study was not undertaken in a closed system, these extraneous variables could not be isolated.

Another factor that must be considered is the teaching personnel. Looking at the 23 school questionnaires who claimed formal instruction, eleven were taught solely by an English teacher, only four by a librarian, and only eight by a teacher-librarian combination. These findings, coupled with the high incidence of error found among formally trained students likens itself to the findings of Reed cited in Chapter I. Most teacher training universities do not require any courses in library skills, and this researcher finds it difficult to believe that a sound course of study in proper library skills can be accomplished without this instruction.

CHAPTER V. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications of this study

This researcher feels that this study, though limited in its range of generalizations by the size and nature of its sample, can provide insights for evaluation of current library instruction practices. This falls mainly into two categories: that of improving current primary curriculums, and pre-testing and re-educating senior high students.

As study findings showed, formal students were more prepared for the course work ahead than were the informally trained students. This is an advocation for a formal method of instruction in library skills within the primary grades. Yet, due to the high error rate of those formally trained, one cannot automatically advocate a formal system solely as it exists. One of the primary failures is the lack of a standardized method of instruction within our educational framework. The time has long since past when man can hope to retain all information written. It must be through practice and basic knowledge of reference techniques that man can hope to find the information he needs to improve his knowledge. Teachers must be taught the art of teaching library skills so that the ignorance cycle now existing can be broken by the very young.

But, until these measures can be accomplished, it is the responsibility of each senior high school curriculum to institute a library skills course to prepare students for the individualized studies awaiting them. St. Francis Seminary has recognized this need and can provide an example of library instruction within a senior high facility. Each freshman is pre-tested upon entering the facility and, based on these test results, a course of study is established incorporating exercises to improve deficiencies and to present new avenues to research. The course is conducted by a skilled

librarian and is incorporated into the Department of English. The course is met weekly during the entire freshmen year and a sample curriculum might appear as follows:

1st quarter: library orientation
in depth study of the cards within the card catalog
the card catalog and its functions

2nd quarter: Dewey Decimal Classification System--what it is and how to use it

3rd quarter: Reader's Guide
Catholic Periodical Index
how and when to use the above

4th quarter: miscellaneous references
biographical references
atlases
gazeteers
bi-lingual dictionaries
almanacs
encyclopedias and yearbooks
globes and maps
National Geographic Key
use of AV materials as learning keys[12]

Moreover, as the need arises within grades 10-12, formal classes are conducted by the librarian to broaden and enrich those skills covered in grade 9. But most importantly, this entire instructional system exemplifies the communication between faculty and library which must exist if students are to adequately profit from their high school curriculums.

Recommendations for Further Study

As was stated previously, due to the small sample size, a significant finding could not be made. This researcher feels that the subject matter herein is of a great importance and should be pursued on a higher level as justification for a standardized library skill curriculum.

Moreover, this study did not concentrate on the role of teacher interest in the pursuit of library skills. This researcher feels that

without proper motivation and encouragement to use library facilities, even a prescribed curriculum is doomed to failure.

Finally, it would perhaps be of value to the library skills curriculum at St. Francis Seminary to post-test this same sample at the completion of their library skills course to evaluate the course and make recommendations for student follow-up in grades 10-12.

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The following are a list of questions regarding the practices found in your school library. Please answer the questions by checking the appropriate block or giving the short answer required.

1. Are basic library skills covered in the education process at your school?

37 YES 1 NO

2. Is the instruction conducted on a formal (ie. prescribed curriculum) or informal (ie. instruction given to students as needed) basis?

23 FORMAL 14 INFORMAL

3. Who conducts the library skills instruction in your school?

English Teachers = 30 Public Library Staff = 1
Librarians = 16 Volunteers = 1

4. If your course of instruction is a formal one, how long has the program been in effect?

1 - 6 yrs. = 11 11 - 15 yrs. = 2
7 - 10 yrs. = 1 several years = 1

5. At what grade level are library skills first covered?

K = 1 2 = 3 4 = 8 6 = 1 8 = 1
1 = 4 3 = 10 5 = 3 7 = 3 primary = 3

6. Which of the following library skills are covered in the instruction process? (Please check all areas applicable.)

32 USE OF TITLE PAGE IN BOOKS

33 USE OF INDEX IN BOOKS

33 USE OF TABLE OF CONTENTS

30 USE OF GLOSSARY

33 HOW TO LOCATE BOOKS VIA CALL NUMBER

31 THE DEWEY DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION

36 USE OF THE CARD CATALOG
- 31 AUTHOR ENTRY
- 29 SUBJECT ENTRY
- 31 TITLE ENTRY
- 18 "SEE" & "SEE ALSO"

20 THE TYPES OF CARD CATALOGS

9 HOW TO READ A UNIT CARD

36 ALPHABETIZATION IN THE CARD CATALOG

36 HOW TO USE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

35 USE OF A DICTIONARY
- 27 ABRIDGED
- 20 UNABRIDGED

32 USE OF AN ATLAS

15 USE OF GAZETEERS

27 USE OF ALMANACS

32 USE OF MAPS

16 USE OF JR. READER'S GUIDE, COMPLETE READER'S GUIDE, OR OTHER PERIODICAL INDEXES

6 USE OF PAMPHLET & VERTICAL FILES

13 HOW TO WRITE FOOTNOTES

20 HOW TO WRITE A BIBLIOGRAPHY

10 HOW TO EVALUATE BOOKS THROUGH BOOK REVIEWS

5 HOW TO COMPLETE CALL SLIPS FOR BOOKS & PERIODICALS

16 USE OF AV OR NON-PRINT MAT'LS. (EG. FILM STRIPS, CASSETTES, RECORDS) FOR RESEARCH

7. How many books are housed in your library facility?

1,000 - 3,000 = 6	4,000 - 10,000 = 17
3,000 - 4,000 = 9	10,000 - 15,000 = 3

8. How many periodical titles are housed in your library facility?

0 = 5	11 - 20 = 6	41 - 60 = 5	81 - 90 = 1
1 - 10 = 12	21 - 40 = 2	61 - 80 = 2	

9. Are non-print materials accessible to individual students?

22 YES 12 NO

10. Please describe in detail the format of library instruction within your school, be it formal or informal. If a curriculum guide is available, enclosure of it will suffice for this question.

APPENDIX II

August 1, 1976

Dear Librarian:

I am a graduate student of education at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, and am currently involved in a research study concerning the library skills of entering high school freshmen. My student sample is composed of all 1976 entering freshmen at St. Francis Seminary High School, also in Cincinnati. One of your former students is enrolled in this facility, and thus I am respectfully requesting a portion of your full schedule to assist me in making my study a success.

Would you please take a moment to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me at your very earliest convenience? I have enclosed a stamped self-addressed envelope for your convenience. Unfortunately, I am on a very tight schedule for evaluating your responses, so your utmost cooperation will most certainly be appreciated.

Thank you for your help. I know that you share my goals for the promotion of education through constant and thorough research.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Denise R. Fischer
8250 Kingsmere Ct.
Cinti, Ohio 45231

APPENDIX III

August 30, 1976

Dear Librarian:

Previously, I sent you a questionnaire which I need to complete a graduate research study on the library skills of entering freshmen in high school. Perhaps due to the lag in mail service or some other factor, this questionnaire has been overlooked.

I have thus enclosed a second copy of the first mailing for your completion. I realize that the start of a school year is always a busy time, but I must urgently request that you assist me by returning this form. Without your assistance, my research statistics will have little or no merit, and my many hours of research will be for naught.

I thank you in advance for your prompt attention.

Most sincerely,

(Mrs.) Denise R. Fischer
8250 Kingsmere Ct.
Cinti, Ohio 45231

P.S. If you have responded within five days from the date of this letter, please disregard this duplicate. Thank you.

APPENDIX IV

LIBRARY SKILLS QUIZ NAME_____

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following questions by circling T if the statement is true of F if the statement is false.

(T) F 1. The appendix of a book contains additional material not included in the text of the book.

(T) F 2. A footnote usually contains the page of the work from which the material was taken.

T (F) 3. A "Dictionary" type of catalog is the only type of card catalog a library may have.

T (F) 4. The author's outline of his book might be found in the index to the book.

(T) F 5. A key to the abbreviations of the names of magazines used in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature is given in the front of each issue.

T (F) 6. If I do not know the author's name, I will have difficulty locating the book in the card catalog.

T (F) 7. An encyclopedia should be consulted for the pronunciation of words.

(T) F 8. A card in the card catalog reading: "Forging see also Blacksmithing" means that there is additional material under the heading "Blacksmithing."

(T) F 9. The quickest way to locate a current magazine article on life in China would be to look up "China" in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Lit.

T (F) 10. The table of contents is usually an alphabetical list of the topics treated in the book, telling where to find each one.

T (F) 11. If you look up Robert Louis Stevenson in the dictionary and in the encyclopedia, the longer account will be found in the dictionary.

T (F) 12. A card in the card catalog saying "Exports see Commerce" means that there is no material in the library on "Exports."

(T) F 13. The index is the key to the book, and should be used in looking up a single point or fact.

T (F) 14. The card catalog shows the books in a library as they stand on the shelves.

(T) F 15. The labels on the outside of the catalog drawers indicate the part of the alphabet which is included in each drawer.

(T) F 16. By using the reference scale on a map, I could approximate distances between cities.

(T) F 17. The words at the top of each page in the dictionary indicate what words begin and end each page.

(T) F 18. By looking at the author entry card in the card catalog, you can tell how many pages that book has.

DIRECTIONS: Answer each question by circling the letter of the answer which best completes the statement. DO NOT GUESS. If you do not know the answer, circle I don't know.

19. A gazeteer is
(a.) a dictionary or index of geographical names
b. a book on animals
c. an index to an encyclopedia
d. I don't know

20. A bibliography is
(a.) a list of books
b. a magazine
c. the life story of a person
d. I don't know

21. The best book in which to find the name of the person who said "A stitch in time saves nine" is
a. a dictionary
b. a literature book
(c.) a book of quotes
d. I don't know

22. Books of Fiction are arranged alphabetically on shelves according to
a. title
(b.) author
c. size
d. I don't know

23. The Vertical File contains a collection of
(a.) pamphlets
b. magazines
c. correspondence
d. I don't know

24. If the catalog card has the top line printed in capitals or in red, that means the book is
(a.) about that subject
b. by that person
c. known by that title
d. I don't know

25. The slip upon which the request for a particular book is made is called the
a. author number
(b.) call slip
c. see also reference
d. I don't know

26. In what Dewey section would you find a Bible?
a. 100
(b.) 200
c. 300
d. I don't know

27. To find the book 30 Seconds over Tokoyo in the card catalog, you would look under
a. Seconds
b. the number 30 in the number section of the card catalog
(c.) the word "thirty" (the number 30 spelled out)
d. I don't know

28. A bibliography of references you used for a report helps you to
    a. keep a record of class notes
    b. show sources of information you used
    c. outline your report
    d. I don't know

29. The articles in World Book Encyclopedia and Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia are arranged
    a. in order in which things appeared
    b. alphabetically by subject
    c. in order of importance of subjects
    d. I don't know

30. The Dewey Decimal Classification number is the symbol for
    a. the subject
    b. the price
    c. the author
    d. I don't know

31. Biographies are arranged alphabetically according to
    a. title
    b. person written about
    c. author
    d. I don't know

32. The title card for the book St. John of the Cross would be found filed in which tray?
    a. S - Saint d
    b. Saint e - Saint pet
    c. St - Ta
    d. I don't know

33. A supplement which brings an encyclopedia up to date is called
    a. an index
    b. a yearbook
    c. a catalog
    d. I don't know

34. Current statistics of various kinds may be gotten from
    a. World Almanac
    b. New International Yearbook
    c. American Yearbook
    d. I don't know

35. You plan to give a report on a recently published book and you wish to know what critics have said about it. The best source to use would be
    a. World Almanac
    b. Book Review Digest
    c. World Book Encyclopedia
    d. I don't know

36. For a map of Iran you could consult
    a. World Almanac
    b. Webster's New International Dictionary
    c. Rand-McNally World Atlas
    d. I don't know

APPENDIX V

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This is not a test for a grade, but to see how much you know about the library so that we can gear the instruction to help you. Please follow along as I read the instructions for both test sections.

2. So, do not guess wildly on any question. If you think you know the answer, take a try at it. But, if you'v never heard the term before or have no idea on the answer
   a. on the T-F do not answer
   b. on the multiple choice circle d) I don't know.

3. You have the total period for the test. You have about one minute for each question. Many questions are easy and can be answered in a short period of time. Do not spend a long time on any one question. Skip it and come back to it if you have time. I will tell you when your time is half over.

NAME _____ **APPENDIX VI**

IN ORDER FOR US TO EVALUATE YOUR LIBRARY INSTRUCTION NEEDS, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR SCHOOL LIBRARY EXPERIENCE.

1. At what grade level did you first become acquainted with how a library functions and what is located there?

_____

2. As a rule, who conducted your instruction in library skills? (librarian, English teacher, principal, etc.)

_____

3. Which of the following library skills were you taught in either elementary or junior school? (Please check every area applicable.)

___USE OF TITLE PAGE IN BOOKS

___USE OF INDEX IN BOOKS

___USE OF TABLE OF CONTENTS

___USE OF GLOSSARY

___HOW TO LOCATE BOOKS VIA CALL NUMBER

___THE DEWEY DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION

___USE OF THE CARD CATALOG
- ___AUTHOR ENTRY
- ___SUBJECT ENTRY
- ___TITLE ENTRY
- ___"SEE" & "SEE ALSO" REFERENCES

___THE TYPES OF CARD CATALOGS

___HOW TO READ A UNIT CARD

___ALPHABETIZATION IN THE CARD CATALOG

___HOW TO USE AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

___USE OF A DICTIONARY
- ___ABRIDGED
- ___UNABRIDGED

___USE OF AN ATLAS

___USE OF GAZETEERS

___USE OF ALMANACS

___USE OF MAPS

___USE OF JR. READER'S GUIDE, COMPLETE READER'S GUIDE, OR OTHER PERIODICAL INDEXES

___USE OF PAMPHLET & VERTICAL FILES

___HOW TO WRITE FOOTNOTES

___HOW TO WRITE A BIBLIOGRAPHY

___HOW TO EVALUATE BOOKS THROUGH BOOK REVIEWS

___HOW TO COMPLETE CALL SLIPS FOR BOOKS & PERIODICALS

___USE OF AV OR NON-PRINT MATERIALS FOR RESEARCH (FILM STRIPS, CASSETTES, RECORDS)

4. Were you allowed to check out film strips, cassettes, or records for your personal use?

___YES ___NO

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

APPENDIX VII

DEAR TEACHERS:

I AM CURRENTLY CONDUCTING A RESEARCH STUDY ON STUDENT LIBRARY SKILLS. IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE TYPES OF STUDENT RESEARCH WHICH WILL INVOLVE USE OF THE LIBRARY, I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. PLEASE COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EACH SUBJECT FIELD AND LEVEL YOU TEACH. SINCE I AM ON A TIGHT SCHEDULE FOR MY STUDY, YOUR PROMPT RESPONSE WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. THANKS-- DENISE FISCHER

1. Subject field:_____

2. Classifications of students within the class:_____

3. By consulting your lesson guides for the coming year, please record the types of research you will assign and the number of times (approximate) you will assign them.

FOR EXAMPLE:

ENGLISH
written book report- British classic - once
present dramatic skit of your choice - once
oral book report - any subject - monthly

HEALTH
written report on current trends on nutrition - once

SPANISH
oral report on any aspect of Spanish culture - weekly

FIRST SEMESTER

TYPE OF RESEARCH	FREQUENCY

SECOND SEMESTER

TYPE OF RESEARCH	FREQUENCY